

associating the area and the action with the selected layer as a property of the selected layer in the electronic artwork.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein:
the action is a URL (Uniform Resource Locator).
3. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
compositing the layers of the artwork; and
converting the area and the action to a target output format.
4. The method of claim 3, wherein:
the target output format is HTML (HyperText Markup Language).

5. (Amended thrice) A computer program, tangibly stored on a computer-readable medium, comprising instructions for causing a computer to:

- receive an electronic artwork having a plurality of layers, each layer having transparency information defining one or more non-transparent regions in the layer in a transparent frame;
- receive from a user an input selecting one of the plurality of layers;
- for the selected layer of the artwork, define an area by automatically determining a perimeter boundary of the one or more non-transparent regions; and
- assign an action to the area, the action defining a function that will be activated when the area is selected.

6. (Amended once) The computer program of claim 5, further comprising instructions to:
automatically fit a shape to the perimeter boundary, wherein the shape defines the area.
7. The computer program of claim 5, further comprising instructions to:
composite the layers of the artwork; and
convert the area and the action to a target output format.

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8. The computer program of claim 7, wherein the target output format for the area and the action is HTML.

9. The computer program of claim 8, further comprising instructions to:
write out the composited artwork as an image file and write out an HTML file containing an image map for the area and a URL for the action, the HTML file referring to the image file.

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12. (Amended thrice) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
re-defining the area automatically if the content of the selected layer of the electronic artwork is edited to conform to a new perimeter boundary of the one or more non-transparent regions.

13 In a graphics application that supports dynamic content in layers, the method of claim 1, further comprising:
calculating any dynamic content for the selected layer before the area is defined.

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15. (Amended twice) The method of claim 1, wherein:
the selected layer has two or more non-contiguous non-transparent regions in a transparent frame; and
the area is defined by automatically determining a perimeter boundary of the non-transparent regions in combination.

16. The method of claim 15, further comprising:
generating multiple image maps from the non-transparent regions.

20. The computer program of claim 5, further comprising instructions for causing a computer to:
associate the area and the action with the selected layer as a property of the selected layer.

21. (Amended) The computer program of claim 20, further comprising instructions for causing a computer to:

re-define the area automatically if the content of the selected layer of the electronic artwork is edited to conform to a new perimeter boundary of the one or more non-transparent regions.

22. The computer program of claim 5, further comprising instructions for causing a computer to:

calculate any dynamic content for the selected layer before the area is defined.

24. (Amended twice) The computer program of claim 5, wherein:

the layer has two or more non-contiguous non-transparent regions in a transparent frame;

and

the area is defined by automatically determining a perimeter boundary of the non-transparent regions in combination.

25. The computer program of claim 24, further comprising instructions for causing a computer to:

generate multiple image maps from the non-transparent regions.

28. (Amended once) The method of claim 1, wherein:

defining the area further comprises automatically fitting a shape to the perimeter boundary, wherein the shape defines the area.

29. The method of claim 3, further comprising:

outputting the composited artwork as an image file; and

outputting an HTML file including an image map for the area and a URL for the action.

30. The computer program of claim 5, wherein the action is a URL (Uniform Resource Locator).

Please add claims 31-34 as follows:

31. (New) The method of claim 28, further comprising:
receiving user input selecting the shape.
32. (New) The method of claim 28, wherein the shape is a circle.
33. (New) The method of claim 28, wherein the shape is a rectangle.
34. (New) The method of claim 28, wherein the shape is a polygon.
35. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the perimeter boundary is for the one or more non-transparent regions in combination.
36. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the content of the selected layer includes one or more holes formed between the one or more non-transparent regions; and
wherein holes included within the perimeter boundary are included in the area.
37. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the content of the selected layer includes one or more holes formed between the one or more non-transparent regions; and
wherein defining an area includes automatically determining one or more separate perimeter boundaries for the one or more non-transparent regions, such that the holes are not included within the separate perimeter boundaries.
38. (New) The computer program of claim 6, further comprising instructions to:
receive user input selecting a shape.

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39. (New) The method of claim 38, wherein the shape is a circle.
40. (New) The method of claim 38, wherein the shape is a rectangle.
41. (New) The method of claim 38, wherein the shape is a polygon.
42. (New) The computer program of claim 5, wherein the perimeter boundary is for the one or more non-transparent regions in combination.
43. (New) The computer program of claim 5, wherein the content of the selected layer includes one or more holes formed between the one or more non-transparent regions; and wherein holes included within the perimeter boundary are included in the area.
44. (New) The computer program of claim 5, wherein the content of the selected layer includes one or more holes formed between the one or more non-transparent regions; and wherein defining an area includes automatically determining one or more separate perimeter boundaries for the one or more non-transparent regions, such that the holes are not included within the separate perimeter boundaries.

REMARKS

Claims 1-9, 12, 13, 15, 16, 20-22, 24, 25, and 28-44 are pending. No claim is allowed. Claims 1, 5, 6, 12, 15, 21, 24, and 28 are amended. Claims 17, 18, 26, and 27 are canceled. Claims 31-44 are new. The applicant thanks the Examiner for extending the courtesy of a telephonic interview as reflected in the Interview Summary mailed on August 31, 2001. Reconsideration and re-examination are respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

1. Rejections over Mapedit

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-9, 13, 17, 18, 20, 22, 26, 27, 29 and 30 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mapedit Imagemap Editing Software, Version 2.3 for